

## **SPECIFICATION**

**Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 18, as follows:**

Extending this approach of the N=2 case, the forward recursion equation is then generalized to the N=3 case of FIG. 2(b) as in equation (12):

$$A_j^k = \max_{i=0,1,\dots,7} (A_i^{k-3} + \tilde{\Gamma}_{i,j}^k) \quad \text{for } j = 0, 1, \dots, M-1 \quad (12)$$

where the combined branch metric is obtained by adding three individual branch ~~matrices~~ metrics from time k-3 to time k, and M is the number of states.